

A  
DISCOURSE  
PUBLISHED  
To Instruct and Undeceive the PEOPLE  
In the Point of  
TITHES.

WHEREIN is shewed,

- I. That never any Clergy in the Church of God hath been, or is maintain'd with less Charge to the Subject, than the Establish'd Clergy of the Church of *ENGLAND*.
- II. That there is no Subject in the Realm of *ENGLAND*, who giveth any thing of his own, towards the maintenance of his Parish-Minister but his *Easter-Offering*.
- III. That the change of *Tithes* into *Stipends*, will bring greater trouble to the Clergy than is yet considered; and far less profit to the Country, than is now pretended.

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By *Ph. Treleinie* Gent.

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1 Cor. 9. 7.

*Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? Who planteth a Vineyard and eateth not of the Fruit thereof? Or who feedeth a flock; and eateth not of the milk of the flock?*

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T H E  
Undeceiving of the PEOPLE

In the point of

T I T H E S.

**A**mongst those popular Deceits which have been set abroad of late to abuse the People, there is not any one which hath been cherish'd with more endearments, than a perswasion put into them of not paying *Tithes*: Partly, because it carrieth no small shew of Profit with it; but principally as it seems a conducive means to make the *Clergy* more obnoxious to them, and to stand more at their Devotion than they have done formerly. Upon these Hopes, it hath been the endeavours of some leading Men to represent it to the rest as a *publick Grievance*, That the *Clergy* being but a handful of Men in comparison of all the rest of the Kingdom,

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dom, should go away with the *Tenth* (or as some say, the *Sixth* part) of the Fruits of the Earth; and that the *Minister* sitting still in his Contemplations, should live upon the Sweat of other Mens Brows; and taking pains amongst the People but One Day in Seven, should have the *Tenth part of their Estates* allotted to them for their Maintenance. And 'tis no marvel if some few, on these misperfwasions, have Importun'd the High Court of Parliament from time to time with troublesome and clamorous Petitions to redress this Wrong; and put them up also in the name of whole Counties (although the generality of those Counties had no hand therein) to add the greater Credit and Authority to them. In which Design, although they have prevail'd no further on the two Houses of Parliament, than to be sent away with this general Promise, *That in due time their Petitions should be taken into consideration*; \* and that it was the pleasure of the severall and respective Houses, *that in the mean season they should take care that Tithes be duly paid according to Law*: Yet they which have espoused the Quarrel will not so be satisfied. For when it pleased the Lords and Commons to set out an Ordinance bearing

\* As in  
the Answer  
to those of  
Hartford,  
Kent, &c.

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ing Date November 8. 1644. For the true Payment of Tithes and other Duties according to the Laws and Customs of this Realm; there came out presently a Pamphlet entitled, *The Dismounting of the Ordinance for Tithes*; followed and backed by many a scandalous Paper of the self-same strain. And when it seemed good to the said Lords and Commons, on the precipitancy of some of the Clergy under Sequestration, to set out their Additional Ordinance of the 9th of August, Anno 1647. it was encountred presently with a scurrilous Pamphlet, entitled, *A Preparation for a Day of Thanksgiving to the Parliament for their late Ordinance for Tithes, newly Mounted and well Charged with treble Damages, for the Peoples not giving the Tenth part of their Estates to the Clergy, or Impropropriators*. And this, according to the stile of those Petitions, is said to be the Result of the Parliaments Friends in *Hartfordshire*; tho' I am verily perswaded that few, if any of the Gentry and Men of quality in the Country, were acquainted with it. But be it the result of few or many of the Parliaments Friends (tho' I conceive they are but back-friends to the Parliament, who set so slight a value on their Constitutions) the Title doth afford



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two things worthy consideration; First, That the Maintenance of the Clergy here by Law established, is said to be by giving them the Tenth part of every Mans Estate: And Secondly, That the blow goes higher than before it did, and aims not only at the devesting of the Church of her ancient Patrimony, but at the depriving of the Gentry of their Improvements, which many of them hold by Lease, many by Inheritance, all by as good a Title as the Law can make them. I know there hath been great pains taken by some Learned Men, to state the Institution and Right of Tithes, and several judicious Tractates have been writ about it; which notwithstanding have not found such entertainment as they did deserve; partly, because written in an Argumentative way, they were above the reach of the vulgar Reader; but principally, because written by Men engaged in the Cause, and such as might be biased with their own Interest in it. For my part I am free from all those engagements which may incline me to write any thing for my private Ends, being *one that payeth Tithes* and such other Duties as the Laws and Ordinances do injoin. And tho' I sit far off from the fountain of business,

and

and cannot possible see at so great a distance, what might best satisfy the doubts and clamours of unquiet Men; yet I shall venture to say somewhat in a modest way towards the *Undeceiving of the People* in this point of *Tithes*, whose Judgments have been captivated by those mis-perswasions, which cunningly have been communicated and infused into them. And I shall do it in a way, (if I guess aright) which hath not yet been travelled in this present point; such as I hope will satisfy all them of the adverse party, but those who are resolv'd before-hand, that they will not be satisfied. For whereas the whole controversy turneth on these three hinges: First, That the Maintenance allowed the Clergy is too great for their Calling, especially considering the small number of them; Secondly, That it is made up out of the Tenth part of each Man's Estate: And Thirdly, That the changing of this way by the payment of Tithes into that of *Stipends*, would be more grateful to the Country, and more easie to the Clergy: I shall accordingly reduce this small Discourse unto these three Heads.

*First*, I will shew that never any Clergy in the Church of God hath been,

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or is maintained with less Charge to the Subject, than the established Clergy of the Church of *England*. *Secondly*, That there is no Man in the Realm of *England*, who payeth any thing of *his own* towards the maintenance of his Parish Minister, but his *Easter Offering*. And *Thirdly*, That the *changing of Tithes into Stipends*, would bring greater trouble to the Clergy, than is yet considered, and far less profit to the Country, than is now pretended.

These Propositions being proved, (which I doubt not of) I hope I shall receive no check for my undertaking, considering that I do it of a good intent to free the Parliament from the trouble of the like Petitions, and that the *common People being disabused*, may quietly and chearfully discharge their Duties according to the Laws established; and live together with that unity and godly Love which ought to be between a Minister and his Congregation. This is the sum of my Design, which if I can effect, it is all I aim at: And with this Declaration of my mind and meaning, I trust this short Discourse of mine will be, if not applauded, yet at least excused. First then I am to prove this point:

I. *That*



I. *That never any Clergy in the Church of God, hath been, or is Maintained with less Charge to the Subject, than the established Clergy of the Church of England.*

For proof of this, we must behold the Church of God, as it stood under the Law in the Land of *Canaan*, and as it now stands under the Gospel in the most flourishing parts of Christendom. Under the Law, the Tribe of *Levi* was possessed of *Fourty eight Cities*, and the Territories round about them, extending every way for the space of 2000 Cubits, which in so small a Country, was a greater proportion, than the Rents received by the Clergy of all the Bishopricks and Chapter Lands in the Realm of *England*. Then had they besides Tithes (whereof more anon) the first-born of Mankind, and all unclean Beasts, which were redeemed at the rate of five Shekels apiece, amounting in our Money to 12 s. 6 d. and of the firstlings of clean Beasts, their Blood being sprinkled on the Altar, and the Fat offered for a burnt-offering, the Flesh remained unto the Priests. Of which, see *Numb.* 18. 15, 16, 17, 18. They had also the first-fruits of Wine, Oyl and Wooll, *Deut.* 18. 4. yea, and of all things else which the Earth brought

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brought forth for the use of Man; the first-fruits of the Dough, *Numb.* 15. 20, 21. the *meat-offerings*, the *sin-offerings*, the  
 \* *Lev.* 2. *trespass-offerings*, \* the *shake-offerings*, the  
 3. and 7. *heave-offerings*, and the *shew-bread*; As al-  
 5. 7. so of all Eucharistical Sacrifices, the *breast*  
 and the *shoulder*; of others, the *shoulder*  
 † *Lev.* 7. and the *two cheeks*, and the *man*; † and  
 33. 34. of the whole Burnt-offering, they received  
 ‖ *1b.* v. 8. the *skin*. || Then add, that all the  
 Males of the Tribes of *Israel*, were to  
 appear thrice yearly before the Lord,  
 and none of them came empty-handed:  
 And that if any had detained any thing  
 in part or in whole, which was due by  
 Law, he was to bring a *Ram* for an of-  
 fering, to make good that which was  
 detained, and to add a *fifth part* to it in  
 the way of recompence. Besides, *These*  
*Duties were brought in to the Priests and*  
*Levites without Charge or Trouble.* And  
 if any for their own ease desired not  
 to pay in kind, but to redeem the  
 same for a sum of Money; the esti-  
 mation of the due was to be made  
 •• *Lev.* 27. by the Priest; ∴ and a fifth part ad-  
 12. 13. ded, as before, for full satisfaction. In  
 a word, such and so many allowances  
 had the Priests and Levites, that set-  
 ting by the Tithes of their Corn and  
 Cattel, and of all manner of increase;  
 their

their maintenance had far exceeded that of the *English Clergy*; and adding unto these the Tithes of all Creatures tithable, it doth more than double it. For in the payment of their Tithes *by the Lords appointment*, there was not only a full tenth of all kinds of increase, but such an imposition laid on all kinds of Grain, as came to more than a sixth part of the Crop it self; in so much that of 6000 Bushels, 1121 accrued into the *Priests* and *Levites*; 4779 remaining only to the Husbandman. For first, out of 6000 Bushels (and so accordingly in all after that proportion) a sixtieth part at least, (and that they termed *Therumah* of the *evil eye*, or the Niggards *first-fruits*) was to be set apart for the first-fruits of the Threshing-floor; which was One hundred in the Total. Out of the residue, being 5900 Bushels, the first Tithe payable to the Levites, which lived dispersed and inter mingled in the rest of the Tribes, came to 590 Bushels; and of the residue being 5310 Bushels, 531 were paid for the second Tithe unto the Priests, which ministred before the Lord in his holy Temple; yet so, that such as would decline the trouble of carrying it in kind unto *Jerusalem*, might pay the price thereof in money according to the estimate



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mate which the *Priests* made of it. To which a fifth part being added (as in other cases) did so improve this Tithe to the *Priests* advantage; as that which being paid in kind, was but Ten in the Hundred, being thus altered into money, made no less than Twelve. Now lay these several sums together, and of 6000 Bushels, as before was said, there will accrew 1121 to the Priest and Levite, and but 4779 to the Lord or Tenant. By which accompt the *Priests* and Levites in the tithing of 6000 Bushels, receiv'd twice as much within a little, as is possessed or claimed by the *English Clergy*, even where the Tithes are best paid without any exemptions, which are so frequent in this Kingdom.

But then perhaps it will be said, that the *Levites* made up one of the Twelve Tribes of *Israel*, and having no inheritance amongst the rest but the Tithes and Offerings, besides the Forty Eight Cities before mention'd, were to be settled in way of maintenance correspondent unto that proportion. But so (they say) it is not in the case of the *English Clergy*, who are so far from being one of Twelve or Thirteen at most, that they are hardly One for an Hundred; or as a late Pamphlet doth infer, not one for Five hundred.

dred. \* Who on this supposition, that \* Tithe-  
there are Five hundred Men and Women <sup>gatherers</sup>  
in a Country Parish, the Lands whereof <sup>no Gospel-</sup>  
are worth 2000 l. *per annum*, and that the <sup>Ministers.</sup>  
Minister goeth away with 400 l. a year of  
the said 2000: concludeth, that he hath  
as much for his own Particular, as any  
Sixscore of the Parish, supposing them to  
be all Poor or all Rich alike; and then  
cries out against it, as the *greatest Cheat*  
*and Robbery* that was ever practised.

But the answer unto this is easie, I  
would there were no greater difficulties  
to perplex the Church. First, for the  
Tribe of *Levi*, it is plain and evident,  
that though it pass commonly by the  
name of a Tribe, yet was it none of the  
Twelve Tribes of *Israel*, the House of  
*Joseph* being sub-divided into two whole  
Tribes, those namely of *Ephraim* and  
*Manasseh*, which made up the Twelve.  
And secondly, it is as evident, that it fell  
so short of the proportion of the other  
Tribes, as not to make a sixtieth part of  
the House of *Jacob*; for in the general  
Muster which was made of the other  
Tribes, of Men of Twenty years and  
upwards, such only as were fit for Arms  
and such publick services, the number of  
them came unto 635500 fighting Men;  
to which if we should add all those which  
were

were under Twenty years and unfit for service, the number would at least be doubled. But the *Levites* being all reckoned from a Month old and above, their number was but 22000 in all, ( of which see *Num.* 1. 46. & 3. 39. ) which came not to so many by 273 as the only *first born* of the other Tribes ; and therefore when the Lord took the Levites for the *first born* of *Israel*, the odd 273 were redeemed according to the Law, at five Shekels a Man, and the Money, which amounted to 1365 Shekels, was given to *Aaron* and his Sons, *Num.* 7. 47, 48. Which ground so laid according to the Holy Scriptures, let us next take a view of the *English Clergy*, and allowing but one for every Parish, there must be 9725, according to the number of the Parish Churches ; or say Ten Thousand in the Total, the residue being made up of Curates officiating in the Chappels of Ease throughout the Kingdom ; and reckoning in all their Male Children from a Month old and upwards, the number must be more than trebled. For although many of the dignified and beneficed Clergy do lead single lives, yet that defect is liberally supplied by such Married Curates as do officiate under them in their several Churches. And then, as to the  
dispro-



disproportion which is said to be between the Clergy and the rest of the People, one to Five Hundred at the least: The Computation is ill grounded, the Collection worse. For *First*, the Computation ought not to be made between the Minister and all the rest of the Parish, Men, Women, and Children, Masters, and Dames, Men-servants, and Maid-servants, and the Stranger which is within the Gates; but between him and such whose Estates are Titheable, and they in most Parishes are the smallest Number. For setting by all Children which live under their Parents, Servants, Apprentices, Artificers, Day-labourers and Poor indigent People; none of all which have any interest in the Titheable Lands: The number of the residue will be found so small, that probably the Minister may make one of the Ten, and so possess no more than his own share comes to. And then how miserably weak is the Collection which is made from thence, that this One Man should have as much as any Sixscore of the rest of the Parish, (supposing that the Parish did contain 500 Persons) or that his having of so much were a *Cheat and Robbery*? And as for that objection which I find much stood on, that the *Levites* had no other Inheritance but the  
Tithes

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Tithes and Offerings, *Numb.* 18. 23. whereas the *English Clergy* are permitted to purchase Lands, and to inherit such as descend unto them; the answer is so easy, it will make it self; for let the Tithes enjoyed by the *English Clergy* descend from them to their Posterity, from one Generation to another, as did the Tithes and Offerings on the Tribe of *Levi*: and I perswade my self, that none of them will be busied about purchasing Lands, or be an Eye-sore to the People in having more to live on than their Tithes and Offerings. Till that be done, excuse them if they do provide for their Wives and Children, according to the Laws both of God and Nature. And for the so much *Parallel* in point of maintenance, between the Clergy of this Church and the Tribe of *Levi*.

Proceed we next unto the Ministers of the *Gospel* at the first Plantation, during the lives of the Apostles, and the times next following, and we shall find, that *though they did not actually receive Tithes of the People, yet they still kept on foot their Right*; and in the mean time, till they could enjoy them in a peaceable way, were so provided for of all kind of necessities, that their was nothing wanting to their Contentation. *First*, that they kept on foot their Right,  
and

and thought that *Tithes* belonged as properly to the Evangelical Priesthood, as unto the Legal, seems evident unto me by *St. Paul's* discourse ; who proves *Melchisedech's* Priesthood by these two Arguments : First, that he Blessed *Abraham* ; and Secondly, that he Tithed him, or receiv'd *Tithes* of him. For though in our *English* Translation it be only said, that he *received Tithes of Abraham*, which might imply that *Abraham* gave them as a Gift, or a Free-will-offering, and that *Melchisedech* received them in no other sence ; yet in the *Greek* it is δεξάμενος ἃ ἀβραάμ, which in plain *English* is, that he Tithed *Abraham*, and took them of him as his due, *Heb. 7. 6*. If then our Saviour be a *Priest after the order of Melchisedech*, as no doubt he is, he must have power to Tithe the People as well as to Bless them, or else he comes not home to the Type or Figure : Which power of Tithing of the People, or receiving *Tithes* of them, since he exerciseth not in Person ; it seems to me to follow upon very good consequence, that he hath devolved this part of his power on those whom he hath Called, and Authorised for to Bless the People.

Certain I am, the Fathers of the Primitive times, though they enjoyed not

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*Tithes*



Tithes in specie, by reason that the Church was then unsettled, and as it were in motion to the Land of Rest, ( in which condition those of *Israel* paid no Tithes to *Levi* ) yet they still kept their claim unto them, as appears clearly out of *Origen*, and some other Ancients. And of this truth I think no question need be made amongst knowing Men. The only question will be this, Whether the maintenance which they had till the Tithes were paid, were not as chargeable to the People, as the Tithes now are (supposing that the Tithes were the Subjects own? ) For my part I conceive it was, the People of those Pious times not thinking any thing too much to bestow on God, for the incouragement of his Ministers, and the reward of his Prophets. They had not else *sold off their Lands and Houses, and brought the prices of the things which were sold, and laid them at the Apostles feet*, as we know they did, *Acts 4. 34, 35.* but that they meant, that the Apostles should supply their own wants out of those Oblations, as well as the necessities of their poorer Brethren. I trow, the selling of all, and trusting it to the dispensing of their Teachers, was matter of more charge to such as had Lands and Houses, than paying the Tenth part of their House-rent, or the Tithe of their Lands. And when this Custom

from was laid by, (as possibly it might end with the Apostles themselves) the Offerings which succeeded in the place thereof, and are requir'd, or injoyn'd by the *Apostolical Canons*, were so great and manifold, that there was nothing necessary to the Life of Man, as Hony, Milk, Fowl, Flesh, Grapes, Corn, Oyl, Frankincense, Fruits of the Season, yea Strong Drink, and Sweet Meats, which was not liberally offered on the *Altars*, or *Oblation-Tables*: Insomuch as the Author of the Book called the *Holy Table, Name, and Thing, &c.* according to his scornful manner, saith of them, that *they were rather Pantaries, Larders, or Store-houses, than so many Consecrated Altars.* And though he make those *Canons* but as so many *Pot-guns*, yet as great Criticks as himself esteem otherwise of them, as his *Antagonists* in that quarrel proves sufficiently. And as for that particular *Canon* which requires these *offerings*, it is but an exemplification or particularizing of that which is more generally prescribed by *S. Paul, Gal. 6. 6.* where he enjoyneth him that is taught to communicate to him that teacheth him, in omnibus bonis, in all his goods, as the *Rhemists* read it very rightly, and not in all good things, as our late Translation. Now this Injunction reacheth to all sorts of People, to the Poor

\* *Locuples*  
 & *dives*  
*in domini-*  
*cum, sine*  
*sacrificio*  
*venis &*  
*partem sa-*  
*crificii*  
*quod pau-*  
*per obulit*  
*sumis.*  
*Cypr. de*  
*piet. &*  
*Eleemos.*

as well as to the Rich, as it appears plainly by a passage in *S. Cyprians* works, where he upbraids a *wealthy Widow* for coming empty handed, and without her Offering to the Altar of God and eating of that part of the Sacrifice which the Poor had Offered. \* To the improvement of the maintenance of him that Teacheth, not only the Rich Men were to offer out of their abundance, but the Poor Woman also was to bring her Mite. They had not else come home to *St. Paul's* Commandment, which reacheth unto all sorts of People without any exception; to every one according to that measure of Fortune which God hath given him: Which clearly sheweth, that though the payment of *Tithes* fall heavier upon Landed Men, than possibly it might do in the *Primitive times*, before the Church was in a condition to demand her Rights; yet speaking generally of the People of a Church or Parish, the charge was greater to them then, than it hath been since; the greatest numbers of the People being freed from *Tithes*, (because they have no Lands from whence *Tithes* are payable) who could not be discharged from the Communication of their Goods, and Substance without a manifest neglect of *St. Paul's* Injunction. More then this yet, besides what was communicated in a private way,  
 for



for the encouragement and support of him that *Taught*; which we may well conceive to be no small matter: The publick offerings of the People were of so great consequence, as did not only serve to maintain the Bishop, according to his Place and Calling; and to provide also for the Priests or Ministers which served under him; but also to relieve the Poor and repair their Churches. † And therefore certainly the faithful of those times were generally at more Charge to maintain their Ministry, than the Subject is with us in *England*; the greatest part of which by far, pay no Tithes at all to the Parish-Minister, and no Man any thing at all towards the maintenance of the Bishop, as in former days.

† *Beda in  
histor Ec-  
cles. l. 1.*

Follow we our Design through several Countries, and we shall find the Clergy of most parts in Christendom, either more plentifully endowed, or else maintained with greater Charge unto the Subject, than the Clergy of the Church of *England*. In *France*, the *Author of the Cabinet* computes the Tithes and temporal Revenues of the Clergy, besides Provisions of all sorts, to 80 Millions of Crowns; but his account is disallowed by all knowing Men. *Bodin* reporteth from the Mouth of *Monsieur d'Alemant*, one of the *Presidents of Accompts* in *Paris*, that they amounted to Twelve

Millions, and 300000 of their *Livres*, which is 1230000 l. of our *English* Money; and he himself conceives that they possess Seven parts of Twelve of the whole Revenues of that Kingdom. The Book inscribed *Comment d' Estat* gives a lower estimate, and reckoning that there are in *France* Two Hundred Millions of *Arpens*, (which is a measure somewhat bigger then our Acre) assigneth 47 Millions, which is near a fourth part of the whole, to the *Gallican* Clergy. But which of these soever it be we think fit to stand to, it is resolved by them all that the *Baise-maine*, which consists of Offerings, Churchings, Burials, *Dirges*, and such other casualties, amounteth to as much *per annum*, as their standing Rents: Upon which ground, Sir *Edwin Sandys* computeth their Revenue at six Millions yearly. In *Italy*, besides the Temporal Estate of the Popes of *Rome*, the Clergy are conceived to have in some places a third part of the whole; but in most a moiety. In *Spain*, the certain Rents of the Archbishoprick of *Toledo*, are said to be no less the 300000 Crowns *per annum*; which is far more than all the Bishops, Deans, and Prebendaries, do possess in *England*. In *Germany*, the Bishops for the most part are powerful Princes; and the Canons of some Churches of so fair an *Intrado*, and of such estimation

estimation amongst the People, that the Emperors have thought it no disparagement to them, to have a Canon's place in some of their Churches. And as for the Parochial Clergy in these three last Countries, especially in *Spain* and *Italy*, where the People are more superstitious than they be in *Germany*, there is no question but that the *Vails* and *Casualties* are as beneficial to them, as the *Baïse-maine* is to the *French*.

But here perhaps it will be said that this is nothing unto us of the Realm of *England*, who have shook off the superstitions of the Church of *Rome*, and that our pains is spent but to little purpose, unless we can make good our *Thesis* in the Churches *Protestant*.

We must therefore cast about again: And First, beginning with *France*, as before we did, we shall find that those of the Reformed party there, not only pay their Tithes to the *Beneficiary*, who is presented by the Patron to the Cure or Title; or to the Church or Monastery to which the Tithes are settled by *Appropriations*; but over and above do raise an yearly maintenance for those that Minister amongst them. As the *Irish* Papists pay their Tithes and Duties unto the Protestant Incumbent, and yet maintain their own Priests too by their Gifts and Offerings; or as the People in some places with us in *England*, do pay



their Tithes unto the Parson or Vicar whom the Law sets over them, and raise a Contribution also for their Lecturer, whom they set over themselves. In other Countries where the supream Governours are *Reformed* or *Protestant*, the case is somewhat better with the common People, although not generally so easie as with us in *England*. For there the Tithes are taken up by the Prince or State, and yearly Pensions assigned out of them to maintain the Ministers; which for the most part are so small, and so far short of a *Competency* (though by that name they love to call it) that the Subject having paid his Tithes to the Prince or State, is faine to add something out of his Purse, towards the mending of the Stipend. Besides, there being for the most part in every Church two distinct sorts of *Ministers*, that is to say, a *Pastor* who hath Cure of Souls, and performs all Ministerial Offices in his Congregation; and a Doctor (like our *English* Lectures, which took hint from hence) who only trafficketh with the Word. The *Pastor* hath his Stipend from the publick Treasury; the Doctor being maintained wholly (as I am credibly informed) at the Charge of the People; and that not only by the Bounty or Benevolence of Landed Men, but in the way of Contribution,

tion, from which no sort of People of what Rank soever, (but such as live on Alms or the Poor Man's Box) is to be exempted. But this is only in the Churches of *Calvin's* platform, those of the *Lutheran* party in *Denmark, Suedeland, and high Germany*, having their Tithes and Glebe as they had before; and so much more in Offerings than with us in *England*, by how much they come nearer to the Church of *Rome*, both in their Practice and Opinions, (especially in the point of the Holy Sacrament) than the *English* do. And as for our dear brethren of the *Kirk of Scotland*, who cannot be so soon forgotten by a true born *English* Man, the Tithes being settled for the most part on Religious Houses, came in their fall, unto the Crown, and out of them a third was granted to maintain their Minister; but also ill paid while the Tithes remained in the Crown, and worse when alienated to the use of private Gentlemen, that the greatest part of the burden for support of the Ministry, lay in the way of Contribution on the backs of the People. And as one ill example doth beget another, such Lords and Gentlemen as had Right to present to Churches, following the steps of those who held the Tithes from the Crown, soon made lay-fees of all the Tithes of their  
own

own Demesnes, and left the *Presentee* such a sorry pittance, as made him burthensome to his Neighbours for his better maintenance. How it stands with them now since these late alterations, those who have took the *National Covenant*, and I presume are well acquainted with the *Discipline* and *Estate* of the *Scottish Kirk* (which they have bound themselves to defend and keep) are better able to resolve us. And so much for the proof of the first proposition, namely, That never any Clergy in the Church of God, hath been, or is maintained with less charge of the Subject, than the establish'd Clergy of the Church of *England*. And yet the proof hereof will be more convincing, if we can bring good evidence for the Second also: Which is,

II. *That there is no Man in the Kingdom of England, who payeth any thing of his own towards the maintenance and support of his Parish Minister, but his Easter-offering.*

And that is a *Paradox* indeed, will the Reader say, Is it not visible to the Eye, that the Clergy have the tenth part of our Corn and Cattle, and of other the Increase and Fruits of the Earth? Do not the People *give them the tenth part of their Estates*, saith one of my Pamphlets? Have they not all their *livelihoods out of our Purses*, saith another of them? Assuredly neither  
so,



so, nor so. All that the Clergy doth receive from the Purse of the Subject, for all the pains he takes amongst them, is Two pence or a Groat at *Easter*. He claims no more than this as due, unless the custom of the place, (as I think in some parts it is) bring it upto Six pence. If any thing be given him over this by some bountiful hand, he takes it for a favour, and is thankful for it. Such profits, as come in by *Marriages*, *Churchings*, and *Funeral Sermons*, as they are generally small, and but accidental; so he is bound unto some special Service and Attendance for it. His constant standing Fee, which properly may be said to come out of the Subjects Purse for the Administration of the Word and Sacraments, is nothing but the *Easter-offering*. The *Tithes* are legally his own, not given unto him by the Subject, as is now pretended, but paid unto him as a *Rent-charge* laid upon the Land; and that before the Subject, either Lord or Tenent, had any thing to do in the Land at all. For as I am inform'd by Sir *Edw. Coke* in his Comment upon *Littletons Tenures*, l. 1. c. 9. §. 73. fol. 58. *It appeareth by the Laws and Ordinances of Ancient Kings, and specially of King Alfred, That the first King of this Realm had all the Lands of England in Demesne, and les grands manours & royalties, they reserved*

## The undeceiving of the People

to themselves, and with the remnant they for the defence of the Realm enfeoffed the Barons of the Realm with such jurisdiction as the court Baron now hath. So he, the professed Champion of the Common laws. And at this time it was, when all the Lands in England were the Kings Demesne, that Ethelwolp, the Second Monarch of the Saxon race ( his father Egbert being the first which brought the former Heptarchy under one sole Prince) conferred the Tithes of all the Kingdom upon the Church, by his Royal Charter. Of which, thus Ingulph Abbot of Crowland an old Saxon writer, \* An. 855. (which was the 18th of his Reign ) King Ethelwolp with the consent of his Prelates and Princes which Ruled in England under him in their severall Provinces, did first enrich the Church of England with the Tithes of all his Lands and Goods, by his Charter Royal. Ethelward an old Saxon, and of the Blood Royal, doth express it thus: † He gave the Tithe of his possessions for the Lords own Portion, and ordered it to be so in all the parts of the Kingdom under his Command. Florence of Worcester in

\* Anno 855. Rex Ethelwulfus, omnium Prælatorum & Principum suorumque sub ipso variis Provinciis totius Angliæ præerant gratuito Consensu, tunc primo cum decimis

terrarum & bonorum aliorum sive catallorum, universam dotavit Ecclesiam per suum Regium Chirographum. Ingulph.

† Decimavit de omni possessione sua in partem Domini, & in universo regimine Principatus sui sic constituit. Ethelward.

these

these words : \* King Ethelwulph for \* Æthel-  
the Redemption of his own Soul, and <sup>wulphus</sup>  
the Soul of his Predecessors, discharg'd the <sup>Rex deci-</sup>  
tenth part of his Realm of all Tributes <sup>mam toti-</sup>  
and Services due unto the Crown, and by his <sup>us, Regni</sup>  
perpetual Charter signed with the sign of the <sup>sui partem,</sup>  
Cross, offered it to the three-one God. Roger <sup>ab omni</sup>  
of Hovenden hath it in the self same <sup>Regali ser-</sup>  
words; and Huntingdon more briefly <sup>vitio &</sup>  
thus; † That for the Love of God, and the <sup>tributo li-</sup>  
Redemption of his Soul, he Tithed his whole <sup>beravit, &</sup>  
Dominions to the use of the Church. But <sup>in sempi-</sup>  
what need search be made into so many <sup>terno Gra-</sup>  
Authors, when the Charter it self is extant <sup>phio in</sup>  
in old Abbot Ingulph, and in Matthew of <sup>Cruce</sup>  
Westminster, and in the Leiger book of the <sup>Christi,</sup>  
Abbey of Abingdon? Which Charter be- <sup>pro Re-</sup>  
ing offered by the King on the Altar at <sup>demptione</sup>  
Winchester, in the presence of his Barons, <sup>Anima sua</sup>  
was receiv'd by the Bishops, and by them <sup>& Prede-</sup>  
sent to be Publish'd in all the Churches of <sup>cessorum</sup>  
their severall Diocesses: A Clause being <sup>sueorum uni-</sup>  
added by the King (saith the Book of A- <sup>& trino</sup>  
bingdon) That whosoever added to the Gift, <sup>Deo immo-</sup>  
|| God would please to prosper and increase his <sup>lavit. Flo-</sup>  
days; but that if any did presume to diminish <sup>rent. Wi-</sup>  
the same, he should be call'd to an account for it <sup>gorne.</sup>

† Totam  
terram su-  
am propter  
amorem  
Dei &  
Redempti-  
onem ad  
opes Ec-  
clesiarum  
decimavit.  
Henr.

Huntingd

|| Qui augere voluerit nostram donationem, augeat omnipotens Deus  
dies ejus, prosperos; si quis vero mutare vel minuire presumpserit, nos-  
cet se ad Tribunal Christi redditurum rationem, nisi prius satisfactionem  
emendaverit.

at



*at Christ's judgement seat, unless he made amends by full satisfaction.* In which, as in some other of the former Passages, as there is somewhat favouring of the Error of those darker times, touching the merit of good works; yet the Authorities are strong and most convincing for confirmation of the point which we have in hand.

Now that the King charged all the Lands of the Kingdom with the payment of Tithes, and not that only which he held in his own possession, is evident both by that which was said before from Sir *Edward Coke*, and by the several Passages of the former Authors. For if all the Lands in the Kingdom were the Kings *Demesnes*, and the King conferred the Tithes of all his Lands on the Church of God, it must follow thereupon that all the Lands of the Realm were charg'd with Tithes before they were distributed amongst the Barons for defence of the Kingdom. And that the Lands of the whole Realm were thus charg'd with Tithes, as well that which was parted in the hands of Tenants, as that which was in the occupancy of the King himself, the words before alleged do most plainly evidence, where it said that he gave the *tenth of all his Lands*, as *Ingulph*; the  
Tithe

*Tithe* of his whole Land, as *Henry* of *Huntingdon*; the *tenth part* of his whole Kingdom, as in *Florence of Worcester*; the *tenth part* of the Lands throughout the Kingdom, in the *Charter* it self. And finally, in the Book of *Abingdon*, the *Charter* is usher'd in with this following Title, *viz.* *Quomodo Ethelwolfus Rex dedit decimam partem regni sui Ecclesiis*, that is to say, how *Ethelwolf* gave unto the Church the *tenth part* of his Kingdom. This makes it evident, that the King did not only give *de facto*, the *Tithe* or the *Tenth part* of his whole Realm to the use of the Clergy; but that he had a Right and a Power to do it, as being not only the *Lord Paramount*, but the *Proprietary* of the whole Lands; the Lords and Great Men of the Realm not having then a Property or Estates of Permanency, but as accomptants to the King, whose the whole Land was. And though it seems by *Ingulph* their consents were asked, and that they gave a free consent to the Kings Donation; yet was this but a matter of form, and not simply necessary, their approbation and consent being only ask'd, either because the King was not willing to do any thing to the disherison of his Crown, without the liking and consent of the Peers; or that having their consent and approbation, they should

be

be barred from pleading any *Tenant-right*, and be obliged to stand in maintenance and defence thereof against all Pretenders. And this appears yet further by a Law of King *Athelstane* made in the year 930, about which time, not only the Prelates of the Church as formerly, but the Great Men of the Realm, began to be settled in Estates of Permanency, and to claim a Property in those Lands which they held of the Crown; and claiming, so begun (it seems) to make bold to subduct their Tithes. For remedy whereof, the King made this Law, commanding all his Ministers throughout the Kingdom, that in the first place they *should pay the Tithes* \* of his own Estate, (that is to say, that which he held in his own Hands, and had not estated out to his Lords and Barons) and that the Bishops did the like of that which they held in right of their Churches; and his Nobles and Officers of that which they held in property, as their own Possessions or Inheritance. By which we find that Tithes were granted to the Clergy out of all the Lands in the Kingdom, and the perpetual payment of them laid as a *rent-charge* on the same, by the bounty and munificence of the first *Monarchs* of this Realm, before any part thereof was demised to others. And if perhaps some of the Great Men of

And

\* *Ut im-  
primis de  
meo pro-  
prio red-  
dant Deo  
decimas;  
& Episco-  
pi mei simi-  
liter faci-  
ant de suo  
proprio, &  
Alderman-  
ni mei, &  
prepositi  
mei.*



the Realm had estates in *property* (as certainly there were but few, if any, which had any such Estates in the times we speak of) they charged the same with Tithes by their own consent, before they did transmit them to the Hands of the Gentry, or any who now claim to lay hold under them.

So then, the Land being charged thus with the payment of Tithes, came with this clog unto the Lords, and Great Men of the Realm; and being so charged with Tithes by the Kings and Nobles, have been transmitted, and passed over from one hand to another, until they came to the possession of the present owners: Who whatsoever right they have to the other *nine parts*, either of Fee-simple, Lease, or Copy, have certainly none at all in the *Tithe* or *Tenth*, which is no more theirs, or to be so thought of, than the other nine parts are the Clergies. For whether they hold their Lands at an yearly Rent, or have them in Fee, or for term of Life, or in any other Tenure whatsoever it be, they hold them, and they purchased them on this tacite condition, that besides the Rents, and Services, which they pay to the Lord, they are to pay unto the Clergy, or unto them who do succeed in the Clergies right, a Tenth of all the

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Fruits

Fruits of the Earth, and of the Fruits of their Cattel, and all Creatures Titheable, unless some Ancient Custom or Prescription do discharge them of it. And more then so, whether they hold by yearly Rent, or by right of purchase, they hold it at less Rent by far, and buy it at far cheaper rates, because the Land it self and the Stock upon it, is chargeable with Tithes, as before was said, than they would do, or could in reason think to do, were the Land free from Tithes, as in some places of this Realm it is. To make this clearer by example of an House in *London*, where, according to the Rent which this House is set at, the Minister hath 2 s. 9 d. out of every Pound in the name of a Tithe: Suppose we that the Rent of the House be 50 l. the Ministers due, according unto that proportion, comes to 6 l. 17 s. 6 d. yearly; which were it not to be paid by Law to the Parish-Minister, there is no question to be made, but that the Landlord of the House would have raised his Rent, and not content himself with the 50 l. but look for 56 l. 17 s. 6 d. which is the whole Rent paid, tho' to divers Hands. And if this House were to be sold at Sixteen years purchase, the Grantee could expect no more then 800 l because there is a Rent  
of

of 6 l. 17 s. and 6 d. reserved to the Minister by Law, which is to be considered in the Sale thereof, whereas if no such Rent or Tithe were to issue out of it, he would have as many years purchase for the Sum remaining, which would inhaunce the price 110 l. higher than before it was. Now by this standard we may Judge of the case of Lands, tho' by reason of the difference of the Soil, the well or ill Husbanding of Grounds, and the greatness or smallness of the Stock, which is kept upon them, it cannot be reduced to so clear a certainty. But whatsoever the full Tithe of all be worth to the Minister, we may undoubtedly conclude, That if so much as the Tithe comes to yearly, were not paid to him, the Landlord would gain in his Rent, and the Grantee get it in the Sale: No benefit at all redounding to the Tenant by it, nor any unto him that buyeth it. Or if we will suppose with one of my Pamphlets, (and let it be supposed this once for our better proceeding) that he who officiates in a Parish where Tithes are paid in kind without any subtractions, hath the fifth part of every Landed Man's Estate, that is to say, Four Pounds in every 20 l. *per annum*: The Purchaser or Tenant, be he who he will, may positively build on this in his better



Thoughts, that if Four Pounds in Twenty were not paid to the Minister, the Tenant must pay to his Landlord, and the Purchaser must buy it at the same rates, as he did the rest of the Land. But being that neither the Tenant pays Rent for it, nor the Purchaser hath it in his Grant from him that selleth the Land unto him, The Tithe of the Increase of their Land and Stock, and other Creatures Titheable in their possession, can be none of their own; but must be his, and only his, whom the munificence of Kings and Princes, confirmed by so many Laws and Statutes, have conferred it on. His part indeed it is, not ours, (not the *Tenth part of our Estate*, as my Pamphlet saith) and he receives it of us as a Rent or Duty, transmitted to us with the Land from one hand to another; not as a matter of Gift, or an act of Courtesy.

If then we pay not any thing of our own to the Parish-Minister, which ariseth to him from the increase of Corn and Cattel, and other Creatures Titheable by the Law of the Land, I think it cannot be affirmed by discerning Men, who are not led aside by prejudice and prepossessions, that we give any thing at all of *our own* unto them, more than our *Easter-offering*, be it more or less. 'Tis true, some Statutes

Statutes have been made about the payment of *Personal* Tithes, out of the gains arising in the way of Trade : And I remember Doctor *Burgess* writ a book about it, for which he is as highly Censured by the *Independant* \* as for other things by those of the Prelatical party. But then I think it is as true, that either those Statutes were drawn up with such reservations, or Men of Trades have been so backward to conform unto them, that little or no benefit hath redounded by them to the Parish-Minister, more than to shew the good affections which the Parliaments of those times had unto the Clergy. And if we pay nothing of our own towards the maintenance of the Clergy, out of the increase of our Grounds and Stocks, as I have plainly proved we do not ; and that no benefit comes unto them from the gains of Trading, as I think there comes not : If those small Vails and Casualties which redound unto them from Marriages, Churchings, and the like occasions, be given unto them for some special service which they do perform, and not for his Administration of the Word and Sacraments, I hope my Second Proposition hath been proved sufficiently, namely, that there is no Man in the Kingdom of *England* who payeth

\* As in the Book called Tithes-gatherers no Gospel-officers.

any thing of his own towards the maintenance of his Parish-Minister, but his *Easter-offering*: If so, as so it is for certain, there hath been little Ground for so great a clamour, as hath been lately raised about this particular: Less reason to Subduct or to change that maintenance which the piety of our Kings have given, and the indulgence of succeeding Princes have confirm'd in Parliament, without any charge unto the Subject. Which change, tho' possibly some specious colours may be put unto it, will neither be really beneficial to the Clergy or Laity. And that conducts me on to my last Proposition, *viz.*

III. *That the change of Tithes into Stipends will bring greater trouble to the Clergy, than is yet considered; and far less profit to the Country, than is now pretended.*

This is a double Proposition, and therefore must be looked on in its several parts: First, in relation to the Clergy; whose ease is very much pretended; and next in reference to the Occupant whose profit only is intended in the change desired. It is pretended for the Clergy \* to be a very difficult thing to know the dues demandable of their several Parishes, that it maketh them too much given unto worldly things, by looking after the inning and threshing out of their  
Corn;

\* As in the Ken-  
tish Peti-  
tion and  
other pro-  
jects of  
that kind.



*Corn; and doth occasion many scandalous and vexatious suits betwixt them and their Neighbours: All which they think will be avoided, in case the Ministers were reduced to some annual stipend. And to this end it is propounded by the Army in their late Proposals, that the unequal, troublesome, and contentious way of Ministers maintenance by Tithes, may be considered of, (in Parliament) and a remedy applyed unto it. But under favour of the Army, and of all those who have contrived the late Petitions to that purpose, I cannot see but that the way of maintenance by annual Stipends, will be as Troublesome, Unequal, and Contentious too, as that of Tithes by Law established; especially if those annual Stipends be raised according to the platform which is now in hand. For as far as I am able to judge by that, which I have seen and heard from the chief contrivers, the design is this: A valuation to be made of every Benefice over all the Kingdom, according to the worth thereof one year with another; a yearly Summ according to that valuation to be raised upon the Lands of every Parish, which now stand chargeable with Tithes; the Money so assessed and levied, to be brought into one Common Treasury in each several County, and committed to the hands of*

special Trustees hereunto appointed ; and finally, that those Trustees do issue out each half year, such allowances to the Ministers of the severall Parishes, respect being had unto the deserts of the Person and the charge of his Family, as they think fittest ; yet so, that the Impropropriators be first fully satisfied according to the estimate of their Tithes and Glebe. This is the substance of the project. And if the Moneys be assessed in the way proposed, only upon the *Landed Men*, whether Lords or Tenants, and not upon Artificers, Handicrafts, and Men of Mysterious Trades, who receive equal benefit by the Ministers labours, the way of maintenance by *Stipends* will be as unequal altogether, as by that of *Tithes*. And if it be but as unequal, I am sure it will be far more troublesome. For now the Minister or Incumbent hath no more to do, but to see his Corn brought in and Housed (being to be cut and cock'd to his hand both by Law and Custom ) and being brought in, either to spend it in his House, or sell the residue thereof to buy other Provisions. Which if he think too great an Avocation from his Studies, he may put it over to his Wife, or some trusty Servant, as Gentlemen of greater Fortunes do unto their *Bailiffs*. And I my  
self

self know divers Clergy Men of good Note and Quality, to whom the taking up of Tithes brings no greater trouble, than once a Month to look over the accounts of their Servants : Besides, that many of them, keeping no more in their Hands, than what will serve for the necessary expence of Household, let out the rest unto some Neighbour at an yearly Rent. But when the Tithes are turned to Money, and that the Minister hath neither Corn nor Hay, nor any other Provisions of expence of Household, but what he buyeth by the Penny : What an unreasonable trouble must it needs prove to him to trudge from one Market to another, for every bit of Bread he eats, and every handful of Malt, which he is to spend ? And if Corn happen to be dear, ( as it is at this present ) one quarter of a years Provision bought at the price of the Market, may eat out his whole years allowance. Besides, I would fain learn, for I know not yet, whether the valuation be to be made yearly, and to hold no longer than that year, or, being once agreed on, to endure for ever. If it be made from year to year ; either the Minister must be at a certain trouble in driving a new bargain every year, with each severall and respective Occupant within the Parish ; or  
at



at a greater trouble in attending the Trustees of the County, till they have list and leisure to conclude it for him. But if the valuation once made be to hold for ever, which is I think the true intent of the design; I would fain know, in case the price of all Commodities should rise as much by the end of the next hundred years, as it hath done in the last, and so the next Hundreds after that; how scant a pittance the Poor Minister will have in time, for the subsistence of himself and his Family-charge. For since the 26th of King *Henry* the VIIIth, when a survey was taken of all the spiritual promotions in this Kingdom, and the clear yearly value of each returned into the Court of the *Exchequer*, the prices of Commodities have been so inhaunced, thro' the encrease of Coin, that had not Benefices been improved proportionably, but held unto the valuation which is there recorded, the Ministry in general had been so poor, so utterly unable to have gone to the price of the Markets, that many must have digged, or begged for an hungry livelyhood.

And yet we do not see an end of the mischief neither; for when the Tithes are changed to a Summ of Mony, and the Mony brought into a common Bank or Treasury, the Minister will be sure to undergo

dergo a certain loss, and be vexed with more uncertain troubles. For when this *Clergy-Office* is once erected and settled in a constant course or method, as all Offices be; there must be *Treasurers, Receivers, Tellers, Auditors*, besides under-officers, in each several County; every of which will look to have some benefit by his Place and Office, if not his whole Subsistence by it: And I would fain know of these grand Projectors, by that time every one of these Cooks hath licked his Fingers, and each *Cerberus* hath had his Mouthful, how pitifully short the Commons must needs prove to the hungry Clergy, who are to live on the remainder: Now as the loss is more than certain, so will the trouble be as great as the loss, and no less certain too, though it be uncertain. For when the Poor Clergy-man hackneyeth to receive his *Stipend*, how many put-offs shall he find, ere he speed of his business. For either *Mr. Treasurer is not at leisure*, or *the Money is not yet come in*, or *better Men than he must be sped before him*; and having danced a Fortnight in this attendance, may possibly be forced to a composition, and take Eggs for his Money, or else pay very dearly for his expedition. Such courses have been formerly complained of, in the King's *Exchequer*; *Committees* in the Country

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try are not free from the like complaints; and much I fear, least this new Office prove as full of delays and trouble ( for the best of us are but Men, and subject to corrupt affections ) as either of the others have been found to be. But then, if Mr. *Treasurer* have a further Power either of Augmentation or of Diminution, according as he judgeth of the Ministers diligence, or looks upon him in Respect of his Charge and Family, What a base Vassalage and Thralldom must the Poor Clergy-man be brought to, in having such a Super-Intendent to judge of his Parts and Diligence, or to assign him an Allowance for his Wife and Children? How punctually must Mr. *Treasurer* be attended and crouched unto, gifted, and bribed from time to time, either in hope to have the yearly *Stipend* mended, or else for fear to have it lessen'd? The *Chancellors* were thought to Lord it with too high an insolency, when the Poor Country Minister did appear before them. But these who are to bear the Bag, and upon whom the Clergy must depend for a poor Subsistence, will be sure to Lord it over them with contempt enough; more than the *Chancellor* or *Bishop* in the worst times of their Government: In case at last they do not like *Judas* think all wast which is given to *Christ*, under pre-  
tence



tence of keeping it for more *Pious uses*. And what a trouble and vexation to ingenious minds this must needs be thought, let the Reader judge.

So then, the way of Ministers maintenance by yearly *Stipends* being as unequal, and more troublesome than that of *Tithes*, let us next see whether it may not prove as contentious also. 'Tis true indeed, there have been many suits in the Courts of *Westminster*, between some *Incumbents* and their Neighbours about matter of *Tithes*; but if it be examined where the fault lieth most, I doubt it will be rather found to proceed out of Covetousness in some Parishioners, than any difficulty in discovering the demandable dues, or any contentiouness in the Ministers. For many Country People reckoning all good gains of which they can defraud the Parson, are apt enough on all occasions to subduct their *Tithes*, and either to pretend *Customs*, or plead *Prescriptions*, to decline the payment. And though they commonly attempt it first in such Trifling matters, as are not considerable in themselves, and would bring a Scandal on the Minister, should be too strict, and trouble them for matters of so slight a nature; yet when he looks upon the consequent, and that the withholding or subducting

ducting of those *petit Tithes*, is but to make a way for the rest to follow; he finds more reason to insist on a punctual payment, than otherwise the nature of the thing would bear. And if a Suit insue upon it, I see not why it should be charged upon the Minister, who is accomptable to God, the Church, and his whole succession for any diminution of the Churches Rights, by his remifness or connivence. But wheresoever the fault lies, *contentious suits* do sometimes happen, there is no question of it: And can we think *contentions* will not also rise about the payment of the *Stipends*? Some Men conceive themselves to be over-rated, others are apt enough to think that the Tradesman who gets more by his Shop, than they do by the Plough, should be as liable as themselves to this common burden; and some believing that no *Tithes* are due at all, will neither pay in kind, or Mony. Some course must then be taken to inforce a payment, where payment is denyed upon these Pretensions; and there is no compulsive Course without some Contention: And then supposing that some Course must be taken to inforce a payment, (as I can see no hope how it will be avoided) I would next know by whom this Course must be pursued: If by the Trustees for the County,

ty, they will be like to prove but ill Solicitors in another Man's business, as being to get nothing but their pains for their labour ; besides that, spending, as they must, on the common Stock ( and Men we know, are very apt to cut large Thongs out of another Man's Leather ) the Bill of Charges for one Suit, may possibly devour the Fruits of the whole Benefice. If by the Minister himself, as it is most likely, we are but where we were before, and by avoiding one *contention* for *Tithes* in kind, the Minister must be engaged in another for *Tithes* in Money, which comes all to one. For that such suits will follow on this Alteration, I look on as a matter unavoidable ; considering especially, how infinitely the Country-man, who aims at nothing in the change but his gain or profit, will find himself deceived of his expectation, and consequently will be more stubborn, and untractable when he seeth his Error. ,

For that the change of *Tithes* into *annual Stipends* will not be so much unto his profit as he doth expect, and hath been intimated to him by some leading Men, who have the hammering of the Plot, will be no hard matter to demonstrate. I know that nothing is pretended openly in the Alteration, but that the Occupant may  
have



have his *Tithes* at a certain Rent ; and not be troubled to expect till the Parson comes to set out his Dues. But I know too, that generally they have been fed with a secret hope, That if the Parliament prevailed in the present War, they then should pay no *Tithes* at all ; but every Man of what Estate or Trade soever, should be contributory to the Charge of the Ministers maintenance. Just so the Prince of *Orange* dealt with the *Boors* of *Holland* : Assuring them, that if they prospered in the War against the King of *Spain* (which was then in hand) they should pay no *Tithes* unto their Minister ; and in the mean time that the *Tithes* should be taken up towards the maintenance of the War for the common Liberty. But when the War was brought to so fair an issue, that the *Boor* thought to be exempted from the payment of *Tithes* : Answer was made, That they should pay none to the Minister as they had done formerly, whereby their Ministers in effect were become their Masters ; but that the *Tithes* were so considerable a Revenue, that the State could not possibly subsist without them ; that therefore they must be content to pay them to the *States Commissioners*, as they had done hitherto, and that the State would take due care to maintain a Ministry. By means where-

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therefore lets them go without grief or trouble. And I have mark'd it commonly amongst my Neighbours (who I believe are of the same Temper with other Occupants) that the same Men who took no thought for parting with their *Tithes* in kinds, having compounded for them at a rate in Mony, invented more delays, and made more excuses, to put the payment off for a Week or Two, and so from one Day to another, than for the payment of their *Tithes* in all their Life time. So dear a thing is Mony to us Country people, that he who shall perswade us to redeem a supposed inconvenience with a real and a constant expence of Treasure, will be counted but an evil Counsellor. A visible evidence whereof we have now amongst us : For though the *quartering of Soldiers* be the heaviest bondage that ever a free-born People did languish under, and such as Men of Means and Quality would buy out upon any Terms : Yet generally the Country-man had rather make himself a Slave, and his Wife a Drudge, and let them spend upon his Victuals, than part with Mony to remove them to some other place. My inference hereupon is this ; either the valuation of each severall Benefice will be true and real to the worth, or not. If not, it may redound indeed to the Ploughman's



man's profit, but then it comes accompanied with a publick fraud, which I believe no Christian State will be guilty of. And on the other side, if the Rates be made according to the full worth of the Benefice, it will be little to the profit of the Husbandman, who might have Farmed his *Tithes* as cheap of the Parson or Vicar; besides the hearts grief it will be unto many of them to part with ready Mony for a thing of convenience, without which they might live as happily as their Fathers did.

And if it be not to the profit of the Ploughman this way, I am sure that in another way it will not be to his content or his profit either. For taking it for granted, as I think I may, that I have hit on the design which is now on foot, that is to say, that the yearly profits of each Benefice in every County, be brought into one common Bank or Treasury within the County, and then disposed of by Trustees, according as they judge of the deserts of the Person, and take into consideration his Family-charge; It may so happen (and will doubtless) that in a Parish where the Tax or Sessment cometh to 400 l. *per annum*, the Minister may not be allow'd above an Hundred. The residue will be wholly in Mr. *Treasurers*

Power, either to feast with his Friends, or lay up for his Children ; or at the best to settle it on such who relate unto him, or can make Means and Friends to enlarge their Pensions, though such perhaps as were never seen nor heard of by the Parish, whence the Money comes. And if Men think it as it is, an ill piece of Husbandry, to have the Soil carried off their own Land, and laid on anothers, to the impoverishing of their own, and enriching of his: I cannot see but that it will be thought a worse piece of Husbandry, and prove of very ill digestion to most Country Stomacks; to have the Fat of their Livings carried to another place, and given unto a Man whom they never saw, and who is never like to feed their Souls with the Bread of Life, or their Bodies with the Life of Bread: Their own Poor Minister mean while, from whom they have reason to expect it, being so discouraged and impoverish'd that he can do neither. For whereas those who were possessed of the richer Benefices, did use to keep good Hospitality, to entertain their Neighbours and relieve their Poor, and do many other good offices amongst them as occasion served, both to the benefit and comfort of all sorts of *Parishioners*: It may so happen, and it will (as before I said) that the Minister may  
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be so ill befriended by Mr. *Treasurer*, and the rest of the *Trustees* for the County, that instead of being either a benefit or a comfort to them in the way proposed, he may prove a burden, and a charge. And though I doubt not but as great care will be taken, as can be desired in the choice of those who are to have the disposing of the publick Monies; yet to suppose that Men once settled in an Office of such Trust and Power, may not be subject unto partialities and corruptions, were an imagination fitter for the Lord Chancellor *Verulam's* new *Atlantis*, or Sir *Thomas More* his Predecessor's old *Utopia*, or a *Platonick* Common-Wealth; than the best tempered Government in the Christian World. For my part, looking into the design with the best Eyes I have, and judging of it by the clearest light of Understanding, which God hath given me, I am not able to discern, but that the change of *Tithes* into *Stipends* (in the way propounded) will bring greater trouble to the Clergy than is yet consider'd; and far less profit to the Country than is now pretended: Which is the Third and last of my Propositions, and is, I hope, sufficiently and fully proved, or at the least made probable if not demonstrative

I have said nothing in this Tract of the right of *Tithes*, or on what motive or considerations



siderations of preceeding claim, the Kings of *England* did confer them upon the Clergy: Contenting my self at this time with the *matter of Fact*, as namely, That they were settled on the Church by the Kings of this Realm, before they granted out Estates to the Lords and Gentry, and that the Land thus charged with the payment of *Tithes*, they passed from one Man to another, until it came unto the Hands of the present Occupant; which cuts off all that Claim or Title which the misperswaded Subject can pretend unto them. I know it cannot be denied but that notwithstanding the said Grants and Charters of those Ancient Kings, many of the Great Men of the Realm; and some also of the inferiour Gentry possessed of Manours, before the *Lateran* Council, \* did either keep their *Tithes* in their own Hands, or make infeodations of them to Religious Houses, or give them to such Priests or Parishes, as they best affected. But after the Decree of Pope *Innocent* the III<sup>d</sup>. (which you may find at large in Sir *Edw. Cokes* Comment upon *Magna Charta*, and other old Statutes of this Realm in the Chapter of *Tithes*) had been confirmed in that Council (*Anno. 1215*) and incorporated into the Canons and conclusions of it, the payment of them to the Minister, or Parochial

\* *Ante Concilium Lateranen-  
se, bene po-  
terant Lai-  
ci decimas  
sibi in feu-  
dum reti-  
nere, vel  
aliis qui-  
buscunque  
Ecclesiis  
dare.* Lind-  
wood in  
Provinc.  
cap de de-  
cimis.

chial Priest, came to be settled universally over all the Kingdom: Save that the *Templars*, the *Hospitalers*, and *Monks* of *Cisteaux* held their ancient priviledges of being excepted for those Lands which they held in occupancy from this general rule. Nor have I said any thing of *Impropriations*; partly, because I am perswaded that the Lords and Gentry, who have their *Votes* or *Friends* in *Parliament*, will take care to the saving of their own Stakes; but principally, because coming from the same original Grant from the King to the Subjects, and by them settled upon Monasteries and Religious Houses, they fell in the ruin of those Houses to the Crown again (as of due right the *Tithes* should do, if they be taken from the Clergy;) and by the Crown were alienated in due form of Law, and came by many mean conveyances to the present Owners. Only I shall desire, that the Lords and Commons would take a special care of the Churches Patrimony, for fear lest that the prevalency of this evil humour which gapes so greedily after the *Clergies Tithes*, do in the end devour theirs also. And it concerns them also in relation to their right of Patronage, which if this Plot go on, will be utterly lost, and Churches will no longer be presentative at the choice of the *Patron*; but  
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se, bene poterant Lai-  
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dum retinere, vel  
aliis quibuscunque  
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wood in Provinc.  
cap de decimis.



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either made Elective at the will of the *People*, or else *Collated* by the *Trustees* of the several Counties (succeeding as they do in the Power of Bishops) as now Committee-men dispose of the preferments of the sequestred Clergy. If either by their Power and Wisdom, or by the Arguments and Reasons which are here produced, the *Peoples* Eyes are opened to discern the Truth, and that they be deceived no longer by this popular Error, it is all I aim at, who have no other ends herein, but only to *undeceive them in this point of Tithes*; which hath been represented to them as a publick grievance conducing manifestly to the diminution of their Gain and Profit. If notwithstanding all this care for their information, they will run headlong in the ways of *spoil and sacrilege*, and shut their Eyes against the light of the Truth, shine it never so brightly; Let them take heed they fall not into that infatuation which the Scripture denounceth, that *seeing they shall see, but shall not perceive*; and that the stealing of this Coal from the *Altars* of God, burn not down their Houses. And so I shut up this discourse with the words of our Saviour, saying, that *no Man tasteth New Wine, but presently he saith, that the Old is better.*

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